

# NEWS & INFORMATION

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## Commonwealth of Virginia

### Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe

*The following is an email to state employees sent on Oct. 24.*

Let me express my thanks to those of you who have volunteered to serve as Officers of Election for the Nov. 8 Presidential Election. It is important that we ensure sufficient staffing of all of the Commonwealth's voting precincts, and I appreciate your willingness to volunteer for this important duty. There are localities which may still need assistance, so if you have not already volunteered, consider signing up online at <https://voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/OnlineForms/OfficerofElection> to serve your local community or a surrounding locality.

As a reminder, Officers of Election are paid both for attending the required training before the election and for working on Election Day. Payment varies from locality to locality. Officers of Election must be registered voters in the Commonwealth.

For state employees, DHRM Policy 4.05 ([http://web1.dhrm.virginia.gov/itech/hrpolicy/pol4\\_05.html](http://web1.dhrm.virginia.gov/itech/hrpolicy/pol4_05.html)) permits the use of paid Civil and Work Related Leave to serve as an Officer of Election, with approval by your supervisor. Please contact your Human Resource Office for additional information.

More details on serving as an Officer of Election can be found on the Virginia Department of Elections website at <http://elections.virginia.gov>, along with a wealth of other information on the election process.

I want to encourage you to vote on Election Day. Citizens have no greater privilege in this great democracy, and I hope you will exercise this precious right to vote in the General Election. If you have a long commute or will be traveling at the time of the election, please consider voting absentee. The deadline to request an absentee ballot through the mail is 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 1. If you want to request an absentee ballot in person, you must do so by 5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5. See more information on absentee voting at <http://elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/index.html>.

There is great interest in this election, and the volume of traffic online and at the offices of our local registrars has been record-breaking, so please do not wait until the last minute to participate in this year's election. Again, I appreciate your assistance and your service to the Commonwealth.

### Make an impact on our community with a donation to CVC

*The following is an open letter to Virginia Tech employees from Kevin Foust, chief of police and director of security.*

*Foust is the honorary chair of the 2016 Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign.*

A few weeks ago, I had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the *Ut Prosim* spirit of the Hokie Nation during the Virginia Tech Police Department's 24-hour relay fundraiser. Ten members of the department ran 138 miles, raising about \$3,000 for the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign.

On behalf of the Virginia Tech Police Department, I would like to thank everyone who made a donation and came out to cheer us on in the rain. We appreciate your support and your dedication to making a difference in our community.

And, while hundreds of individuals supported our 24-hour relay, departments across the university are showing their support for the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign by holding fundraisers of their own.

Thanks to these fundraisers and individual pledges, about 6 percent of our employees have donated more than \$121,000 toward our \$325,000 goal. We still have a long way to go, but I know that with your help, Virginia Tech employees can show the community that we too embrace the *Ut Prosim* way of life.

Remember, every gift, no matter how small, can have a huge impact on our community. With more than 1,000 charities to choose from, including dozens located right here in the New River Valley, you can truly make a difference.

Just imagine the lives that could be changed if each of us made a donation; the hungry would be fed, the homeless would have shelter, and veterans would receive the support they need. With your help, the possibilities are endless.

Please join me in supporting this year's Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign. While the campaign will continue through Dec. 12, I encourage you to make your donation today at <http://cvc.hr.vt.edu/donate>.

### Employees with Flexible Spending Account VISA cards expiring in November will receive new cards

Employees and dependents with Flexible Spending Account (FSA) VISA cards expiring Nov. 30 will receive a new card(s) in the mail in early November. To ensure the card is mailed to the correct address, employees are encouraged to verify their home address. Employees can verify their address and check their benefit card status at [www.benefitadminsolutions.com](http://www.benefitadminsolutions.com) or by calling 1-877-451-7244.

Learn more about how Flexible Spending Accounts can help save employees money at [www.hr.vt.edu/benefits/fsa](http://www.hr.vt.edu/benefits/fsa).

For more information contact the HR Service Center at [HRServiceCenter@vt.edu](mailto:HRServiceCenter@vt.edu) or 540-231-9331.

### Employees asked to take survey to gauge interest in parenting program

Raising children in today's society can be fun and rewarding, but also challenging. Children are faced with many challenges and parents must be prepared to provide appropriate guidance at the appropriate time.

55 percent of parents are worried that their child may struggle with anxiety or depression, while more than 40 percent are worried that their child may have problems with drugs or alcohol, according to a Pew Research Center survey.

Due to popular request, Hokie Wellness is pursuing opportunities for employees to learn more about today's difficult parenting topics, such as substance abuse, cyber safety, and body image.

Employees are asked to take a brief survey at <http://bit.ly/2eorY7A> to help to determine what parenting topics are most important, and when and how the information should be presented.

The survey will be available for two weeks. The results will be presented exclusively to Hokie Wellness.

For more information, contact Hokie Wellness at 540-231-8878 or [hokiewellness@vt.edu](mailto:hokiewellness@vt.edu).

## Use high-availability phones to call when building power is out

The vast majority of Avaya telephones (model 9611g, voice-over-IP devices) in use across campus operate using the network and electrical power in each building. When a building's power goes out, these phones will not work until power is restored.

High-availability telephones, powered independently of building electricity, can be used to dial 911 or to place other calls during a power outage.

For more information about high-availability phones or to order them, communications liaisons should contact Network Infrastructure and Services' Customer Service at 540-231-6460 or [cssnis@vt.edu](mailto:cssnis@vt.edu).

## Learn about mindfulness, meditation, and stress management at Koru Mindfulness series

Employees are invited to discover the importance of mindfulness at the Koru Mindfulness series. Koru Mindfulness is a curriculum designed to teach mindfulness, meditation, and stress management specifically to young adults; however, all ages are welcome to attend.

The Koru Mindfulness series for employees will be held on Wednesdays from Nov. 30 to Dec. 21 from 7:30-8:45 a.m. in North End Center (room 2200). Space is limited and registration is required at <http://bit.ly/2eyVbyK>.

During the series, participants will be introduced to the practice of mindfulness and learn several skills, including meditation for managing stress. Participants are required to attend all four sessions and purchase the book, *Wherever You Go There You Are*, by Jon Kabat-Zinn prior to the first session. The required text can be purchased from local bookstores or Amazon.

For more information, contact Hokie Wellness at 540-231-8878 or [hokiewellness@vt.edu](mailto:hokiewellness@vt.edu).

## Virginia Tech employees thank police with 'care coolers'

A group of Virginia Tech employees have come together to show their care and appreciation for the men, women, and K-9s of the university's Police Department.

For the last few months, more than a dozen employees in Virginia Tech's Office of Business Services have been collecting dozens of items to create 68 "care coolers." The coolers were delivered to the Police Department on Oct. 11.

Each cooler included a personalized thank-you note, items for a quick break (water, crackers, peanuts), and a Police Officer Survival Kit with the following items:

-- Life Saver: To remind you of the many times you've been one.

- Starburst: For that burst of energy you'll need.
- Payday: Because you're not doing it for the money.
- Paper Clip: To help hold it all together.
- Hershey Kisses: Because you deserve them from all.
- Gum: To help your unit stick together.
- Tootsie Roll: To help you roll with the punches.
- Peppermint Patty: To help you keep your cool.
- Snickers: To remind you to keep your sense of humor.
- Mounds: For the "mounds" of courage you need.
- Smarties: For the "wisdom" to make lifesaving decisions.
- Laffy Taffy: To remind you that "laughter" is always the best stress reliever.
- Dum Dums: Because sometimes your day "sucks" too.
- Medals: Because we want to thank you and honor you for all the sacrifices you make to keep us safe.

The university's three K-9 officers also received a special treat.

Items were donated by the Office of Business Services, which includes the following departments – Finance and Administration, Air Transportation Services, Fleet Services, Printing Services, Mail Services, Parking Services, and Administrative Services Consulting Services.

During the past two years, employees in the Office of Business Services have donated items to the Ronald McDonald House in Roanoke, volunteered with the Montgomery County Christmas Store in Christiansburg, held a supply drive for the Montgomery County Human Society in Christiansburg, and participated in "Blessings in a Box" by filling shoe boxes for orphans in Guatemala.

## Little Hokie Hand-Me-Down events set for Nov. 15-16

The fourth annual Little Hokie™ Hand-Me-Down, formerly known as the Donate and Swap, is scheduled for Nov. 15, from noon to 6 p.m. in the Graduate Life Center's multipurpose room (155 Otey St). Students and their families are invited to attend.

The event will extend a second day, Nov. 16 from 8 a.m. until noon, for university staff members.

The event, sponsored by the Graduate Student Assembly, Women's Center and the Graduate School, offers Virginia Tech students and families the opportunity to pick up new and gently used baby and children's clothes, toys, equipment and more, free of charge.

Organizers will be collecting items for the event Nov. 1-15. Donations can be dropped off at the Welcome Center in the Graduate Life Center lobby, or at the Women's Center, located at 206 Washington St.

The most requested and appreciated items include: clothes for children from newborn to age 10; toys, music, DVDs, books; maternity clothing; lactation devices; formula; bottles and other feeding supplies; strollers; car seats; high chairs and booster seats; bedding; bathing and grooming supplies; school supplies; and unopened packages of diapers.

On the day of the event, students and their families will be given a shopping bag and invited to fill it with as many items as they need.

University staff members can come to the second day of the event to fill a bag.

For more information, contact Jessie Meltsner at [jmelts@vt.edu](mailto:jmelts@vt.edu).

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